

4200

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
HELD IN WASHINGTON, D. C., MAY 12, 1921.

The sixth meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts during the fiscal year 1921 was held in its office at 1729 New York Avenue, northwest, Washington, D. C., Thursday, May 12, 1921.

The following members were present:

Mr. Moore, Chairman;
Mr. Fraser;
Mr. Bacon;
Mr. Ayres;
Mr. Mowbray;

also Lieut. Colonel C. O. Sherrill,
Secretary and Executive Officer, who superseded Major C. S. Ridley on April 1, 1921.

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m.

1. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETINGS: The minutes of the Commission meeting held February 11th and of the Committee meeting held in New York City on February 28, 1921, were approved.
2. CASKEY MONUMENT: A revised design for the Caskey Monument, to be located in Arlington, was submitted to the Commission by the Presbrey-Leland Company, 11 East 47th Street, New York City. The Commission stated that they have no objection to this design provided it falls within the requirements as to dimensions.
3. MONUMENT TO REAR ADMIRAL GHEEN: A design for a proposed monument to be erected in Arlington to Rear Admiral Edward H. Gheen was submitted to the Commission by the War Department. The Commission approved the design with the inscription provided the monument meets the limitations as to dimensions. The Commission suggested that the ornamentation be restudied to bring it more in scale with the monument. It is now too large. (Exhibit A).

4. PEARY MEMORIAL: The Commission gave further consideration to a revised design for the proposed monument to Rear Admiral Peary to be located in Arlington. The Commission recommended a lower plinth, square, and cut off at the corners with bronze chops to support the ball.
5. MONUMENT TO LIEUT. LUIGI BARTOLUCCI-DUNDAS: A design for a proposed monument to be located in Arlington to the memory of Lieutenant Luigi Bartolucci-Dundas of the Italian Navy was submitted to the Commission by the J. F. Manning Company, of Washington, D. C. The Commission recommended that the perpendicular part for the monument, as shown in the design, be omitted and that instead the design be revised so as to have the cross appear on the upper part of the flat stone with the inscription below the cross. The Commission believe that by making the stone flush with the turf there will be an excellent opportunity for a notable advance in the matter of Arlington monuments.
6. MISSOURI CENTENNIAL COIN: Mr. Fraser brought to the attention of the Commission a number of sketches made by Mr. Robert I. Aitken, sculptor, of New York City, for the proposed Missouri Centennial fifty-cent piece. The Commission were unanimous in the head of Daniel Boone for the obverse. Among the designs for the reverse the sculptor suggested the Missouri State seal. It was thought there was too much detail in the design of the seal to assure good results in the coin. The Commission therefore suggested a free rendering of the seal of the State of Missouri by representing the bear and possibly the State motto. (Exhibit B).
7. MODEL FOR THE MILITIA AND WARRANT OFFICERS INSIGNIA: The Commission approved models for the Militia and Warrant Officers Insignia made by Anthony de Francisci for the War Department.
8. RED STAR ANIMAL RELIEF WAR MEMORIAL TABLET: The Commission approved

the model of Lionel Moses for the Red Star Animal Relief War Memorial Tablet which is to be erected in the State War and Navy Building.

9. SOLDIERS MEMORIAL CROSS: A model for the proposed Memorial Cross for the World War Section in Arlington was brought to the attention of the Commission by the Memorial Cross Committee of the American Women's Legion. The model (2" scale) represented a cross in the center of a platform which would require thirty-two square feet of marble. The base of the cross had been given an architectural treatment of which the Commission did not approve and the Commission also thought the base too high.

The Commission gave thorough consideration to the whole matter and decided that for every reason it is desirable to return to the original idea of having a broad grass walk leading up to a background of trees, this background to be informal. The cross which is to be in marble should be as simple as those in France and rise from the turf with possibly a very simple pedestal. The inscription will be "In memory of our men in France" or something equally simple. This inscription may go either on the cross or on a slab set into the ground immediately in front of the cross. (Exhibit C).

10. ✓ NATIONAL BOTANIC GARDEN: Colonel Sherrill reported that shortly after the opening of the Sixty-seventh Congress on April 11, 1921, Representative Langley introduced a Bill in the House of Representatives (H. R. 2166) which contemplates extending the existing botanic garden area into the Mall to take up East and West Seaton Parks or remove the garden to East Potomac Park. A statement was immediately prepared as of the Commission in protest against the passage of this Bill and again setting forth the reasons for adopting the Mt. Hamilton site. A copy of this statement was sent to all the scientific and botanical organizations who have endorsed the National Botanic Garden project and on May 4, 1921 Senator Brandegee reintroduced his Bill (S. 1560)

which contemplates changing the taking line of the Anacostia reclamation project so as to include the Mt. Hamilton tract. The Commission expressed the hope that action on this Bill might be taken in the very near future.

11. ✓ GRANT MEMORIAL: In connection with the proposed plan for the establishment of the National Botanic Garden, Colonel Sherrill called attention to the desirability of relocating the existing so-called botanic garden at the foot of the Capitol and of taking steps to carry out the proposed plan for this area which is to be the head of the Mall and to be known as Union Square. Colonel Sherrill called attention to the section in the Sundry Civil Act for 1922 which provides that -

"The appropriation of \$5,000 made in the Sundry Civil Act approved August 1, 1914, for unveiling and dedicating the memorial to General Ulysses S. Grant, and for each and every purpose connected therewith, including erecting and taking down viewing stands and putting the grounds in sightly condition, is made available for said purposes during the fiscal year 1922, and shall also be available for removal of so much of the iron part of the brick and iron fence on the east side of the Botanic Garden as in the opinion of the superintendent of the garden may be necessary to improve the surroundings of the said memorial. However, the large stone or brick gateposts on the east side of the garden shall be taken down to a level with the substructure which also is made of brick or stone.

For removal and reconstruction of a part of the fence around the Botanic Garden made necessary on account of the completion of the Grant Memorial, to be immediately available, \$3,000, or so much thereof as may be necessary."

Colonel Sherrill reported that Mr. Hess is unwilling to have any part of the fence removed so as to open the botanic garden area because he says his plants must be protected. The Commission, however, adhered to its former decision in the matter and suggested that the action of Congress in this matter as above indicated should be carried out. A recent investigation in the grounds indicates that the plants and shrubs now growing there are not at all

of great value.

12. NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES BUILDING: The Commission received the following letter on the morning of the 12th from Mr. Bertram G. Goodhue, together with revised designs for the National Academy of Sciences building:

"Learning yesterday from Mr. Louis Ayres that the next meeting of your Commission is to be held in Washington Thursday next, I obtained permission from my clients, the National Academy of Sciences and the National Research Council, to ship to you by express the rendered front elevation, two fragmentary perspectives, one of the entrance and one taken as nearly as can be determined from the corner of the Lincoln Memorial and the plans as roughly revised to meet my clients last wishes. I should be very grateful to you and your Commission for a prompt rejection or acceptance of the design as presented with, - in case of your acceptance, - any recommendations you may care to make. It occurs to me in this connection that the single divisions in the bronze framework of the windows can now readily be changed to two supports each much lighter, of course, than the present single ones."

The Commission thought the design satisfactory, and in keeping with the Lincoln Memorial. The design was approved by the Commission. (Exhibit D)

13. ✓ DARLINGTON MEMORIAL FOUNTAIN: The Commission approved a model for the Darlington Memorial Fountain submitted by Mr. Jennewein. The fountain is to be located in Judiciary Square.

14. ✓ NUNS OF THE BATTLEFIELD MONUMENT: The Commission inspected a revised model for the monument to the Nuns of the Battlefield at the studio of Mr. Connor. The Commission felt there was little improvement in the model from that previously submitted, and that a number of changes should be made. The sculptor was advised of the recommendations of the Commission. (Exhibit E).

15. POLICE MEMORIAL: Mr. Connor called the attention of the Commission to two models which he made as a memorial to the Policemen of Washington. With regard to the design for a tablet the Commission thought it had not ad-

vanced to a point where they would be justified in giving it attention further than to say that the groupings seem to be entirely unstudied and that they would require radical changes in order to make them satisfactory. The Commission did not feel that a resort to the model of the seated figure shown would produce a satisfactory result.

16. SOUTHWORTH COTTAGE: A letter had been received from Sarah M. Huddleson, M. D., 202 Eleventh Street, southwest, Washington, D. C., suggesting that Southworth Cottage be preserved as a literary landmark of Washington. The Commission stated that they could not take the initiative in the matter but that the subject could properly be brought before the Commission by means of a bill in Congress which might be referred to the Commission for advice. The writer had also suggested maintaining Analostan Island as a part of the park plan, with regard to which the Commission advised that this island is a part of the park plan for the future development of Washington and the threatened use of the island for commercial purposes is regarded as a very serious matter.

17. ✓ INSCRIPTION, FRANCIS SCOTT KEY MEMORIAL: A design of the inscription for the Francis Scott Key Memorial was submitted to the Commission by Mr. Niehaus. The Commission felt an improvement could be made in the lettering and also in the arrangement of the inscription. The Commission recommended that the attention of Mr. Niehaus be called to pages 22 and 23 of Frank Chouteau Brown's book on "Letters and Lettering". (Exhibit F).

18. AMERICAN CEMETERIES IN FRANCE: Mr. Moore who had returned on May 11th from a trip to Europe for the purpose of laying out plans for the development of American Cemeteries in France in company with Mr. Greenleaf, Mr. Wm. Mitchell Kendall and Colonel Charles C. Pierce, Chief of the Graves Registra-

tion Service, reported that the trip was considered very satisfactory. There are to be four American Cemeteries in France, one at Suresnes, Romagne, Belleau-Wood, and Bony, or Flanders Field, and one at about thirty miles south of London. Mr. Moore stated that at Suresnes they are trying to secure additional land. A rest-house is needed there, and also a place for the keeper and his family and the intention is to construct two rather small buildings. There will be a terrace from which a view may be obtained over Paris. As to the "Doughboy" in Suresnes, it was felt that this statue did not properly belong in that cemetery as it represented only one of a number of the war activities, each of which might also claim their particular type of monument. Mr. Moore stated that at Belleau-Wood they will try to secure considerable additional ground for this cemetery and negotiations in this respect are now underway. At Romagne there is ample land. It is the largest of the cemeteries and with the hills around about is very beautiful. At Bony, or Flanders Field, where the New York Brigade, under General Ryan, did their fighting, a good opportunity is offered to relate the cemetery to the town by the construction of a roadway and a suitable approach. The American Cemetery in England will be about thirty miles south of London, at Brookwood, near Dorking.

Mr. Moore stated that the members of the Commission conferred with the French and English Graves Commission, and that they consider the plans for the development of the American Cemeteries far beyond their expectations. Mr. George Gibbs, Jr., landscape architect, who has been designated by the War Department for this work, is now at work on the plans and it is expected that they may be received for the attention of the Commission early in June. Mr. Moore said that the graves are now too close together and that it is intended to take out every other one. This is also to apply to the World War Section at Arlington.

19. OFFICIAL CALL ON THE PRESIDENT: The Commission called officially on President Harding, who was greatly pleased to meet the members. Mr. Moore in behalf of the Commission briefly told the President as to the plans for the development of the National Capital, and the President expressed himself in accord with them.

20. ZERO MILESTONE: The Commission inspected a model for the Zero Milestone and recommended that--

The reveal be eliminated from the top of the stone.

The Mariner's compass with points of compass indicated by engraving, as recommended by the Commission on September 3, 1920, be revised to cut-out the design of star points (perhaps eight in number) inset in stone. Corner designs may be added of Zodiac symbols or points, on which to indicate information as to latitude, longitude, and sea-level. Minor details in the lettering are to be changed, otherwise the model and design were approved. The symbol of the Transport Corps is to be retained even though the corps is abolished. As to the "Bankhead inscription", the Commission recommended retaining this inscription on the stone, according to their previous decision and as approved by the Secretary of War.

21. ✓ WEST POTOMAC PARK, REFLECTING BASIN, CROSS SECTION OF COPING AND SIDEWALK: Two typical sections were considered in detail by the Commission, each affecting the Reflecting Basin proper and the smaller basin immediately west of Seventeenth Street. It was approved by the Commission that the sidewalk and the grass area immediately adjacent to the coping, where shown, were to be a continuation of one another, in which case the coping was to be flush with the sidewalk and the grass area, with no coping reveal.

Further, it was decided that the coping (showing a moulding on its face, and previously approved by the Commission) should be reconsidered on the

ground; and that two models be constructed each without mouldings and put into position and viewed in place by the Commission. The models suggested were as follows:

One - 3' wide x 9" thick, and
One - 2'-8" " x 9" ", and each painted a color
to resemble granite.

Further, each model, in place of the present moulding, was to have a corner with a $1/4$ " radius.

22. ✓ WEST POTOMAC PARK; TYPICAL SECTIONS OF 40' AND 50' DRIVE WITH CURBS:

Two sections were presented, each with a cement curb 8" wide by 6" height, showing $3/16$ " batter and $3/4$ " round; the crowns of the 40' and 50' roads being respectively 6" and $6\frac{1}{2}$ " in height. These sections were approved by the Commission without change.

In connection with the above sections a grading plan was presented showing the proposed grading for Riverside Drive leading from the Lincoln Memorial to the foot of the property coming under the jurisdiction of the Rock Creek Parkway Commission. The grades on road center line shown by the proposed grading were 1.6% to less than $1/2$ of 1%. This plan was approved by the Commission without change.

The Commission made a tour of inspection in the early afternoon to the Grant Memorial, through the Mall to the Lincoln Memorial, and then returned to resume the session. The Commission adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

C O P Y

May 14, 1921.

Sir:

In reply to your communication of April 15th, (File No. 293.6, Cemeterial Branch), transmitting a design with inscription for a monument to be erected in Arlington to Rear Admiral Edward H. Gheen, I have to inform you that the Commission of Fine Arts at their meeting on May 12, 1921, approved this submission, provided the monument meets the limitations as to the dimensions. The Commission suggest that the ornamentation be restudied to bring it more in scale with the monument. It is now too large.

Very respectfully,

(signed) C. O. Sherrill

Lieut. Col., Corps of Engineers,
Secretary and Executive Officer.

Hon. John W. Weeks,
Secretary of War.

Enclosure: Blueprint.

EXHIBIT A.

May 14, 1921.

Dear Mr. Aitken:

Mr. Fraser brought to the attention of the Commission of Fine Arts, at their meeting in Washington on May 12th, your designs for the Missouri Centennial Coin.

The Commission liked the designs, and in selecting a set for the proposed centennial coin were unanimous in the choice of the head of Daniel Boone (marked X) for the obverse. As to the reverse, the Commission suggest a free rendering of the seal of the State of Missouri, by representing the bear and possibly the State motto.

The Commission would be pleased if you could re-submit the design to Mr. Fraser as early as possible. It would be very much appreciated if the model could be ready for the next meeting of the Commission on Thursday, June 9th. The Missouri Centennial Exposition is to take place in Sedalia, Missouri, August 8-20, 1921, and the Centennial Committee desires to sell 5,000 coins in advance of the exposition to meet the cost of production. The Mint would require at least a month to make the die and produce the coins.

Sincerely, yours,

(signed) C. O. Sherrill,

Lieut. Col., Corps of Engineers,
Secretary and Executive Officer.Robert I. Aitken, Esq.,
630 West Twenty-fifth Street,
New York City.

EXHIBIT B.

C O P Y

May 17, 1921.

Dear Captain Granger:

The design for the cross for Arlington submitted at the meeting of the Commission on May 12th was discussed. The Commission are unanimously of the opinion that for every reason it is desirable to return to the original idea, that is to say, a broad grass walk leading up to a background of trees, this background to be informal. The present tree mass, however, should be enriched with cedars. Immediately in front of this background a marble cross, as simple as the crosses in France, should rise from the turf. Whether there shall be a low comparatively wide and very simple pedestal, or whether the cross shall rise directly from the sod, is an open question. The ladies of the committee prefer the cross rising directly from the turf. The Commission inclines toward a very simple base. Both the Commission and the ladies of the committee feel that the location and the occasion call for simplicity, and no architectural treatment in the surroundings.

The inscription will be "In memory of our men in France", or something equally simple. This inscription might go either on the cross or on a slab set into the ground immediately in front of the cross.

Sincerely, yours,

(signed) Charles Moore
Chairman.

Captain Alfred Granger,
619 North Michigan Avenue,
Chicago, Illinois.

EXHIBIT C.

C O P Y

May 16, 1921.

Dear Mr. Goodhue:

I take pleasure in informing you that the Commission of Fine Arts at their meeting on May 12th in Washington approved your design for the National Academy of Sciences Building.

Very truly, yours,

(signed) C. O. Sherrill,

Lieut. Col., Corps of Engineers,
Secretary and Executive Officer.

Mr. Bertram G. Goodhue,
2 West Forty-seventh Street,
New York City.

EXHIBIT D.

C O P Y

May 17, 1921.

Dear Mr. Connor:

After inspecting your model for the monument to the "Nuns of the Battlefield" on May 12th, the Commission of Fine Arts requested me to report to you as follows:

1. The curve in the face of the monument seems to produce effects of light and shade not intended and quite disturbing. The mouldings are not quite right and should be studied carefully.

2. Your work on the figures has not progressed beyond the point reached by you when the Commission made their previous visit. They seem to be wholly undeveloped and to be mere indications of what you probably intend to do. Of course you will overcome the monotony in the grouping, and your studies should give individuality to the several figures.

3. The Commission will be pleased to have you give a reference to the quotation from Abraham Lincoln so that they may verify it. A recent experience has led the Commission to be insistent on this point.

Very truly, yours,

(signed) C. O. Sherrill,

Lieut. Col., Corps of Engineers,
Secretary and Executive Officer.

Jerome Connor, Esq.,

322 North Carolina Avenue, S. E.,

Washington, D. C.

EXHIBIT E.

May 17, 1921.

Dear Mr. Niehaus:

The Commission thought your inscription for the Key Statue was pretty good, but they want to be sure about the cutting of the lettering and the form of some of the letters. The Roman lettering, as shown on pages 22 and 23 of Frank Chouteau Brown's book on "Letters and Lettering" is the lettering which the Commission prefer; then if you could rid of the short line "And the" so as to make a solid block below the line "And to the" the Commission would prefer to have you do so. They call your attention also to the desirability of more space along the sides of the inscription.

Of course you will accept these suggestions subject to your own judgment as to the spacing. The Commission is under the limitation of having to consider the inscription by itself without relation to the design of the drum of the monument.

Sincerely, yours,

(signed) C. O. Sherrill,

Lieut. Col., Corps of Engineers,
Secretary and Executive Officer.

Charles H. Niehaus, Esq.,
Eagle Crest Studio,
Grantwood, New Jersey.

